Statement—II

Information on FTAs/PTAs/CECA being negotiated

Sl.No.	Agreement
1.	Free Trade Agreement with ASEAN
2.	Free Trade Agreement with Thailand
3.	Framework Agreement on the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multisectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) FTA
4.	PTA with South Africa Customs Union (SACU) countries
5.	Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement (CECPA) with Mauritius
6.	Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) with Chile
7.	Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with Bangladesh
8.	Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with Gulf Cooperation Council
9.	Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) with Israel

Trade between India and Pakistan

737. SHRI MOOLCHAND MEENA:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Pakistan have pledged to sort out outstanding trade related issues;

(b) whether Commerce Ministers of India and Pakistan met recently and had discussion as to how trade between two countries could be improved;

(c) what were main points discussed between the Ministers;

(d) whether any agreement between India and Pakistan has been reached;

(e) whether both countries have agreed to take up issues jointly at WTO; and

(f) if so, what is the trade level between India and Pakistan at present and to what extent it will be further improved?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E. V. K. S. ELANGOVAN): (a) India and Pakistan have set up a Joint Study Group (JSG) at the level of Commerce Secretaries as strategy for boosting trade between the two countries. The first meeting of the JSG was held in New Delhi on February 22-23, 2005 and it had detailed discussions on promotion of trade and economic cooperation for the mutual benefit of both countries. The JSG constituted two working/Sub-Groups, on Customs Cooperation and Trade Facilitation Measures and Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs). The Terms of Reference (ToR) for the sub-Groups were mutually agreed upon.

(b) to (d) The Commerce Ministers met during the visit of Pakistan Commerce Minister to New Delhi on 19th Septermber, 2005. This was a business interaction meeting without specific agenda. Issues of mutual interest such as need for visa relaxation, opening of land route for trade on permanent basis, infrastructure development, India's request for increasing the Positive List of Pakistan, etc. were discussed; no agreement was signed.

(e) Under the ongoing Services negotiations in the WTO, India has been collaborating with many developing countries including Pakistan to obtain liberal commitments in areas of their interest.

(f) A table indicating trade figures is given below which shows steady growth in bilateral trade during the last three years.

(Value In US $ Million)

YEAR	EXPORTS TO PAKISTAN	IMPORTS FROM PAKISTAN	TOTAL TRADE	TRADE BALANCE	%GROWTH IN BILATERAL TRADE
2002-03	206.16	44.85	251.01	161.31	
2003-204	286.94	57.65	344.59	229.29	37
2004-2005	505.44	95.33	600.77	410.11	74
2004-05 (Apr.—Aug.)	210.17	29.95	240.12	180.22	
2005-06 (Apr.—Aug.)	240.55	58.05	298.60	182.50	24

Source: DGCI&S, Kolkata

Apart from the discussions under JSG, South Asian Free Trade Area Agreement (SAFTA) of which India and Pakistan are signatories, is

scheduled to come into force from 1 January 2006. The Agreement provides for a phased tariff liberalization programme. The volume of trade between two countries is therefore expected to grow further, but cannot be quantified at this stage.

Export promotion schemes

†738. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:
SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are launching many export promotion schemes for increasing exports from the country;

(b) if so, the names of these schemes;

(c) the amount of financial assistance proposed to be provided under each scheme; and

(d) the total amount of financial assistance provided to the trade institutions under these schemes during 2004-05?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E. V. K. S. ELANGOVAN): (a) to (d) The Government has announced a number of export promotion schemes in the Foreign Trade Policy 2004-09. These include Duty Exemption & Remission Schemes including Advance Licensing, Duty Free Replenishment Certificate, Duty Entitlement Passbook Scheme, Vishesh Krishi Upaj Yojana, Served From India, DFCE for Status Holders, Target Plus, Export Promotion Scheme for Capital Goods, ASIDE, Market Access Initiative, Market Development Systems, etc. The details of these schemes are given in the Book titled "Foreign Trade Policy 2004-09" copies of which are available in the Parliament Library. As per Annual Report of the Ministry of Commerce & Industry an outlay of Rs. 1725 Crores has been made for the ASIDE scheme during the 10th Five-Year Plan 2002-07. For the financial year 2004-05 an amount of Rs. 425 Crores has been allocated under the Scheme. Similarly, total grant released under MDA & MAI schemes for the financial year 2004-05 is to the extent of Rs. 55 Crores and Rs. 4.84 Crores respectively.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.